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The Threshold of the Kingdom

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The Threshold of the Kingdom

By

Charles Nicholas Queen

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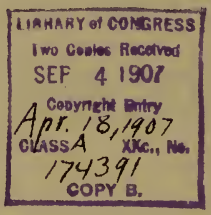

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"Whatsoever things are true,
Whatsoever things are honest,
Whatsoever things are just,
Whatsoever things are pure,
Whatsoever things are lovely,
Whatsoever things are of good report;
If there be any virtue, and
If there be any praise,
Think on these things.
Those things,
Which ye have both learned,
And received, and heard, and seen in me,
Do:
And the God of peace shall be with you."

—Phil. 4: 8, 9.

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THE PRELUDE

I count myself fortunate in being privileged to join in the instruction of the youth of the land. Ministers of the gospel and teachers in the schools are highly privileged classes, for a large investment of their energies is in adolescence. No gold mine yields returns comparable with the investment one who teaches makes in youth. The faithful teacher and minister are more than multi-millionaires, and I am glad by the grace of God I have been allowed a share in this wealth-producing process.

Of the millions of young men and the millions of young women coming to their majority each year, only a small per cent. are more than nominal Christians. However, most of these know something of the Christian system, and their lives have been influenced by that knowledge. It is impossible for one man to gain the ears of this multitude; but one may gain the attention of some, and make a contribution which will bear fruit in the eternities of the future.

The children of to-day are the men of to-morrow, and they are expected to assume control of the government, of business, education, and religion. The retiring generation may serve in counsel, and the childhood of the nation may be very promising, but the theater of action belongs to the strength of the race. In adolescence the framework of character is organized, and the moving principle of the next generation is incarnated.

It has been demonstrated that the adolescent period is the time when religious awakenings are most general, and moral culture takes deepest root. Conversions occur in an irregular proportion until seventeen years, and then the decline is rapid to about twenty-five, after which but few persons "open the door of faith."

Opportunity to help a young life attain spiritual values is short-lived. Whatever is done must be done at once. The childhood of the nation requires

a positive faith in a positive religion, which, if obtained, will require to be taught by those who can say, "I know whom I have believed."

A continual army of young people are arriving at the threshold of the kingdom. It is the hour for instruction. It is the best period for the introduction of Paul's program:

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things."

With those who are at this critical period and opportune time I wish to hold counsel, and I do it with a belief that I may help some. Perhaps the number may be limited, yet I remember that one young person helped in establishing himself in spiritual truths is like constructing a multiplication table.

Exhaustive argument will not be dealt in. No one can think everything out for another. It would not be a wise service if he could. Each one must think for himself. Some questions must be thought through from the beginning before safe conclusions are arrived at. One of the questions to which young people should studiously address themselves is the problem of life's purpose. A clear vision of life will help any one; without it the soul gropes. He is like a vessel on the high seas without chart and compass—the port is forever a problem.

Draw near: perchance a suggestion may be made; a seed-thought may fall into good ground; or together we may rediscover some starlit realm and acquaint ourselves with a section of life and immortality.

If somewhere down the line your life shows improvement, your soul glows with unction, your character is adorned with "grace and truth," I will humbly bow myself before the Father, saying, "Even so; for thus it seemeth good in thy sight, and the glory is thine."

THINK

THINK! That is what the race has been doing for many thousand years. Look and see! Count the "old sea margins of human thought." The human mind is a book of progressive revelations; nor is it complete or full-grown. The race has scarcely gone beyond the primary grades of thought. Still progress is being made. Mind is developing. The thinker is growing. It has attained the ability to discover truth. Thought springs forth and weds itself to thought, and thus, as Shelley has taught us, "thought by thought is piled, till some great truth is loosened." Few studies furnish more attractive chapters than the book of the evolution of mind. "Growing thought makes growing revelation."

To return to the gray dawn of human thought and trace its evolution through the history of the race, with satisfactory results, requires the skill of the student and the time of the plodder. Therefore, for our present profit, let us take the race as we find it, and, opening the book of human thought at the last chapter, make some observations and—think!

Early in the study of this subject attention is called to the thought processes. Deep in-

terest is awakened, and with some amazement we observe the debris of human thought that is "without form and void." Ever since our marriage we have had a certain mirror in the house into which wife and I have looked a great many times, but we have never been able to make any impression upon it. It will not retain our likeness a moment after we are gone. By it I am reminded that there are a great many people whose thinking disappears with the thinking. Nothing is retained.

Many thoughts drop into the mind like meteors out of the sky, with this difference—you cannot tell whence they come. Who fathered them? Where were they cradled? Who carried that thought to the doorstep of your mind? A beautiful thought it may have been and you cherished it until it became dear to you. Never cast a thought aside because you do not know its genealogy; sudden revelations are often the most valuable.

If a thought bursts upon the mind unsought and seems "the revelation of a dream," perhaps it would be well to study introspectively. Some one has said, "Great thoughts come from the heart." One is far from error when he considers sudden and unsought thought as coming from the deep fountains of the soul—fountains he never discovered and may never be able to define with exactness.

Much of our thinking comes by way of suggestion. The senses speak to the mind and the mind begins to work, producing thought.

Thought is as hard to force as sweet-potato plants. It may be done, but the mind is apt to sprout at too many points. That is a very unnatural method. Thoughts must come naturally. One may put himself in the hot-bed trying to bring forth great thoughts, only to give birth to weaklings. Nor can we always mold our thought to our liking. Frequently the production of the mind is very surprising.

Think! Cultivate the habit of thinking. You can develop muscle. You can train the senses. So the thinker is trained in the thinking. The efficiency of the mind is a matter of endowment plus cultivation. Nature is improved upon by nurture; only be orderly in your methods. Do not strain the thinker, or overtax, or enslave. Listen to Paul, "Let all things be done decently and in order."

"Among mortals second thoughts are wisest." Think and then think again. Write it down. Erase it. It might be well to keep from pen, paper, and ink. Sometimes pens of pigs are better than pens of ink. Thinking needs to be well done, like carrots before being placed on the table. On reading a book you can tell whether the author thought twice before committing to writing. In conversation one soon reveals himself and publishes the fact of his thinking or lack of thinking. When speech is golden you know the thinker has not been trifled with; it has been nourished, trained, husbanded, pruned, guarded.

Concentration is an art of rare merit. To fix the mind upon a given subject of thought and hold it there until legitimate conclusions are reached is not an easy accomplishment, but a worthy one; perhaps there is no intellectual attainment of equal value. This attainment is of the utmost importance to the boy or girl pursuing studies. There is usually much noise of a distracting character, both at home and in the schoolroom, and the child that learns to perfect his lesson amid these disturbances gains a thousand leagues. The best way to fix the mind at a given point is to fix it there, and keep fixing it there, and insist on its staying there. Concentrate, focalize, center, think, and do it with a determined purpose.

The thinker is a person of great and unequaled power. He eliminates distances. He dissolves time.

"Oh, the fetterless mind! how it wandereth free
Through the wildering maze of eternity!"
—Henry Smith.

The velocity of light is estimated at 185,500 miles per second, or more than eleven million miles per minute, and the thinker outdistances that. The velocity of electricity is estimated at 288,000 miles per second, and the thinker with one quick step o'erleaps that. It is impossible to differentiate the time taken for human thought to reach the sun. Mind calculates the heavens and wanders among the constellations with greater freedom than you would pass the time in Golden Gate Park. The thinker is

not omnipresent, but at will is present wheresoever he chooses. In imagery he creates according to his own fancy. Without a Gunter's chain he measures the universe far beyond the confines of aided vision. Thought is the magic of the mind.

There are many kinds of thinking, much of which is neither pleasant nor profitable. Our thoughts are our companions. We are not often left alone. The kind of company we keep depends upon the kind of thinking we are doing. Thinking noble thoughts is like entertaining angels. What joy there is in a newborn idea! I am fully persuaded that the pleasantest things in the world are pleasant thoughts. Thoughts, the children of the mind, prattling about the dooryard of the soul, singing within the chamber-walls of the heart, visiting among the hosts of God, chasing up and down the golden ladders of eternity, ministering at the sacred altar within the holy of holies of the universe, mingling in the symphonies of all that is good and true and pure and holy and just and lovely, feasting at the table of philosophers, generals, artists, statesmen, kings, poets, crowned martyrs, and white-robed saints! What a privilege! What a heritage! One never need be alone or feel lonesome when he has noble thoughts to entertain. "What thinkest thou?"

If you would know the wealth of any soul, enter within the thought realm. The assessor, the tax collector, nor yet the banker can tell

the wealth of a single individual until account has been taken of the kingdom of the mind. Noble thought is wealth. It is your property, and it increases with generosity. No man can own noble thoughts and be a miser. They cannot be hid away and accumulate. When they are published, when they are given to others, when they are made to adorn other minds and beautify other souls, then they become generative and other noble thoughts are born into life, which thoughts shall, in turn, beget other thoughts and still others and others, and thus the generation of noble thought is preserved to all eternity. Would you grow rich toward God? Then think holy thoughts into the ears, into the minds, and into the hearts of your fellows. You remember the instruction of our Lord, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom." Even so the wealth of the mind is increased as one gives out, clothes and adorns other minds with his best, noblest, holiest thought.

Ram's horns are not needed to publish your thoughts. If they are worth anything the world will discover them, even though they are given out so that the right hand does not know what the left hand has done. The world usually recognizes a great thought. It may not be able to find the parent of the thought—that is of little consequence; still the world is not slow in discovering a great thinker. Let him live

in the wilderness, like John the Baptist, and the world comes to him. A great thinker can no more be kept in hiding than can a great mountain peak. A Gladstone will discover himself to the world. An Emerson will come to the light. A Paul in chains and a Baxter in a dungeon are heard in all the world. The young man need not be in a hurry. If his thoughts are worth perpetuating, and he makes them known within the realm of his activities, they will receive recognition and will go upon their mission forever beautifying and blessing.

Thought is revolutionizing. It is as Emerson said, "Every thought which genius and piety throw into the world alters the world." It takes men out of servitude into freedom. High and holy thinking precedes high and holy reforms. How can it be otherwise when great thoughts, coming out of the heart, are heard in heaven? The mind of Harriet Beecher Stowe swayed the North and the South, hastening the storm period of the war. When "thoughts that breathe and words that burn" are sent forth, human sympathies are touched and human deeds are compelled.

In looking about for an attestation to man's immortality, shall we pass thought by? Does not the eternal thought speak in our thought? In "Lucile" the author makes this declaration, "Thought alone is eternal." Mind is a revelation of infinite Mind. The thinker in man is the incarnation of the eternal Thinker. Mind—human mind—is a child of God; it is God

incarnate. This is the reason human thought is prospective. Thought is not born of this world. While thought is generative, yet this world and life only suggest thought. The human mind has a personal consciousness that thought is born deeper in the universe. Hence the human mind, in a healthy and normal condition, reflects back to the infinite Thinker, and at the altar of the eternal Thinker pays homage, hopes, prays, worships, adores. There is a universal prospective notion that immortality is a possibility. Mind thinks it so; thought says it is so. Is it not true? If thought is eternal, then the thinker is immortal, and man's hope hath foundations.

Then keep the mind with all diligence. Nourish it with the most wholesome food. With unceasing care train the thinker in his thinking, for "as a man thinketh in his heart so is he." Think! and think! and keep thinking! and keep right on thinking! always in the channels of eternal thought. Think!

WHATSOEVER THINGS

THE scope of subjects ringing the door-bell of the mind, asking to be admitted to the council halls of the soul, is too many to enumerate. They appear in an infinite variety of forms. True enough, we do not see all of them. Daily we stare objects in the face without seeing them. Many of them lie on the surface; they are right by the roadside, under our feet; they are about our heads; we meet them every day, only they are not seen. We have eyes, but we see not. Our eyes are not wise; they have not had the training. It is not enough to plead defective vision; it is defective training, or the lack of training, which keeps one from seeing things which are clearly before the eyes.

Let me illustrate this matter. I have gone through many a clover-field, but to this day of my life I never saw a four-leaf clover except some one pointed it out. I know a person, however, who is always picking up four-leaf clover stems. She seems to find them wherever there is clover. My eyes are not wise upon the clover-leaf subject.

Two men go squirreling down upon the Verdigris. They hunt together. One, being accustomed to the woods and to squirreling, does all the seeing and almost all the shooting.

On the contrary, the same two men sit about the fireside to read. The one reads from forty to a hundred pages an hour, while the other stumbles over five to ten pages an hour. Their visual culture has proceeded along different lines and they are each comparatively blind in the realm of the other.

Many things are not seen—not because we have not eyes, but because our eyes are lacking in their schooling. We have eyes, and yet we must train our eyes to see. They require schooling in the making of observations. Through the sense of vision we are taught to take note of "whatsoever things." The eye is the doorway through which material for the suggestion of thought feeds the mind.

Through the psychic powers man looks in upon the mysteries of the universe and is privileged to study. The "whatsoever things" are before him; nothing is excluded. This is man's realm for exploration.

In the domain of nature Shakespeare said it: There are "tongues in trees, books in running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything." Inquire of the fossils, and a large chapter in the story of the ages is read. Study "the evening lamps alight," and the wondrous glory of God is shed forth. Read the bold type of the handiwork of God in the "open secrets" of nature; plunge into the realm of truth and facts; invade the empires of commerce and government; explore the domain of mechanics and inventions; penetrate the provinces of music

and art; take a homestead in the kingdom of morals and religion; diligently inquire into any section of the universe, moral or physical, and entertaining subjects for thought will lift their heads and bid you welcome. Whether physical or spiritual, the universe is an open book from which man may read, and every time studious attention is given to either kingdom new things reveal themselves.

So long as we keep our eyes open there is no danger of our failing of subjects of thought, of many subjects of thought; yes, of an infinite number of subjects of thought, for nothing is excluded.

Everything comes within the range of the thinker. Because of this the possibilities of the human mind are very great. The most of us are yet unaware of the greatness and comprehensiveness of these possibilities.

The mind may grow, increase, build, and rise, pressing back the border lines of the unknown, discovering other kingdoms and exploring other realms.

But growth—and certainly rapid growth—calls for protection, direction, and support. Experience proves the necessity of this aid in the development of the psychic entities. Mental and moral possibilities demand leadership.

Certain inspiration and momentum come from contact with the masters. Making diligent inquiry into history and literature furnishes the mind with building material, discovers the "tall, sun-crowned men" who have

been the capable leaders, and toward, if not to them there is a natural drawing.

However, while no neglect should be indulged in the study of men and history, it is a fact that the leadership afforded thereby is confusing and sends some adrift because they are without fixed, unyielding, and abiding moorings. "Who among the sons of the mighty is like unto Jehovah?"

Admire the constellations in literature and history and art, and the planetary personalities, but never lose sight of the Star of Bethlehem. It is in the Christ of God where we gain our best view of human possibilities.

"God . . . hath quickened us together with Christ, . . . and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

The possibilities of the human mind and heart "in the ages to come" are defined to us as "the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us."

As we are but in the dawn of spiritual perfection, we have only had a taste of "the exceeding riches of his grace."

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him." But they are being revealed to us, for "the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

Putting one's self in a teachable attitude and remaining there, one can little know of the vastness of his attainments "in the ages to come."

It is not held that man can attain perfect knowledge of the infinite almightiness of God. "In the ages to come" God will still be God, the same wise, eternal Leader; and man will still be man, inquiring into the Infinite.

Withdrawing ourselves from this far-away consideration, it is worthy of note that every subject coming under human observation is for man's study and thought. "All things are clean." Our Lord said so. He also said, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man." Wherein, then, is the defilement? Let him answer, "That which cometh out of the mouth, that defileth a man."

How did Paul stand upon this question? "All things indeed are pure." "I know . . . that there is nothing unclean of itself." Again, "I . . . am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself."

Again, I ask, Where, then, is the defilement? Let Paul answer, "To him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean."

In this word "esteemeth" you have mind, thought, opinion, judgment. If the "mind and conscience is defiled," the estimate made will reflect that defilement.

It is not the subject that is impure; it is the defiled mind and conscience thinking impurity into the subject.

"Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled."

Let me put in parenthesis right here a word of admonition. Discovering yourself thinking unholy thoughts upon any subject, desist. Dispel the fogs and clouds and miasmata from the mind, until in the clear sunlight of His purity all things appear in their proper relation—pure.

While every subject coming under human observation is for man's study and thought, yet man cannot enter into a thorough and detailed consideration of every subject. Human limitations forbid such comprehensive enjoyment. Man hath not the attributes of Jehovah. He can see some things distinctly and well, but he cannot see all things at all times. While mental energies may compass many subjects, they are proficient only in a few subjects, and these few are comprehended with much study.

It, therefore, becomes evident, for practical purposes, that some subjects should be more carefully pursued. The times are calling for specialists—men who know what has been taught, discovered and verified, upon certain subjects.

And, still further, the times are calling for men to pursue lines of investigation, discovering, unfolding, bringing to light, and illuminating that which remains hidden and unknown.

The chances are against your ever knowing everything that is to be known upon, or about

any given subject. Men have spent years of study upon what appear to be insignificant subjects without reaching the confines of these subjects. This is not ground for discouragement, but it is for the creation of a wisely controlled and directed ambition to know more than any one else has ever known upon that particular subject. Like Paul in his mission enterprises, having a desire to preach the gospel where it had not been preached, to organize churches upon new territory, and to build upon no other man's foundation, it is a worthy ambition to blaze new paths into the forest wilds of unexplored subjects for thought.

Bear in mind that while upon some subjects you are adding new information, and carving your name above all other names, in this practical world it is necessary to know something about many subjects. "Know something of everything and everything of something." Most nations are acknowledging the necessity and value of the education of the masses. This is the early morning-time of universal enlightenment. Specialists are multiplying, meeting a genuine need, but the greatest need is the development of the masses. Out of a thoroughly enlightened people will come taller scientists, broader statesmen, truer philanthropists, clearer prophets, wiser leaders. This is the foundation for the next generation—know something of everything.

But know everything of something. This is the reason the mastery of some subject should

be urged: Every subject is related, and, beginning where you will, the one pursued the farthest will bring you the nearest to the Author of all subjects. You can take any isolated fact, and in a few steps reach God. Given a fact; fact suggests action; action, force; force, power; power, person; person, God. Just so it is, the more one studies any given subject the more he learns about the great Head of the universe.

"Whatsoever things." Here is your field. It has no limitations. No one needs to be out of a subject of thought, or out of something to do.

Among the "whatsoever things" there is no subject surpassing the study of mankind. No longer are we raising the question, What is man that man should be mindful of man? We are agreed with Pope that the greatest study of mankind is man.

Take account of man in his domestic relations, noting the evolution of home, of mother love, of father care, of brothers' sympathies, of sisters' affections, of home duties, of fireside privileges, and there opens a kingdom rich in its resources for thought.

Take up the subject of social relations, reviewing man in his conduct toward his fellows, and you will at once find yourself the center of a thousand interesting and perplexing questions buzzing about the brain.

Turn attention to man in his business methods. Watch man as he faces man across the counter, as he meets him in halls of commerce,

as he barters with him in the market-places, as he labors by his side in the shop or in the field, as he buys and sells and contracts and speculates, and you will find much to give pleasure and pain, much to cause the head to ache and the heart to be pained and to render the nerves unstrung, as well as much to cause you to rejoice and thank God.

Take account of man in his governing processes; study him as a citizen; watch his conduct of the blessed right of an elector at the ballot-box; observe his interest or lack of interest in politics; note his movements in municipal affairs; follow him to the halls of legislation; observe him passing judgment upon the laws enacted, enforcing constitutional and statutory measures, organizing revolutions, promoting wars, making treaties, instituting commissions, planning public improvements, developing the resources of the country, providing for the intellectual improvement of its citizens and the education of its sons and daughters, together with so many, many questions vital, virile, and interesting, and here you have many subjects of thought.

Come within the realm of the religious proclivities of the race, and again your subjects begin to multiply *ad infinitum*. About man arise absorbing, commanding, perplexing, intricate, far-reaching questions.

"What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action,

how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!"

This is the being to whom the investigation of all things in the world belongs. This is the being whose subjects of thought are as wide in range as is human comprehension of the universe. In this consideration there is much to awaken a sense of the dignity and importance of human life. Man is certainly marvelously endowed.

Is he the product of evolution? Is not man himself the best argument to the contrary? A long while that theory may be in demonstrating its own fallacy, but evolution cannot account for man—self-conscious, thinking, reasoning, worshipful man.

Was not Moses right? "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him."

In no other way are we able to account for man with his marvelous endowments. It is not enough to say, "God made him," but God "created" him. Think not lightly of your own self-conscious nature. Paul declares, You "are the image and glory of God."

Moses begins the account of the generations of Adam this way, "In the day that God created man."

In Hebrews (2:7) the author speaks of God's creation of man this way, "Thou madest him a little while inferior to the angels."

This is why man thinks so widely, and this is the reason his capabilities are so comprehensive—God created him. Each of you is one of his marvelous creations, "crowned with glory and honor." I am amazed when I think that, by creation, I am crowned with the glory and honor of God! and that to me are opened the "whatsoever things" of the universe to think upon, and to contemplate, and to enjoy! Then comes the admonition of our Lord to the church of Philadelphia, "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

Physically this world is beautiful, but morally, alas! Hence it is upon the moral side of life that discriminations need to be made with nicety and care. Just here is where Paul puts a limitation to the "whatsoever things"; and I ask your patience that we together may take up the interpretation of those things seriatim and think them over with a view to our personal improvement. Studious and devout attention to this Pauline program will produce an improved moral texture. As Charles Sumner taught, "The true grandeur of humanity is in moral elevation, sustained, enlightened, and decorated by the intellect of man."

ARE TRUE

THERE is one inevitable criterion of judgment touching the conclusions hitherto set forth for the instruction of those who are upon the threshold of the kingdom. Can this thinking, and thinking upon all matters material and spiritual, be reduced to practice? If it cannot, then have none of it. If it can, by all means make the effort.

As high and holy thinking upon any and every subject precedes high and holy living in whatever relation, let us now step forth in thought and practice upon, "Whatsoever things are true?"

This admonition is very comprehensive. It relates to what is said—speak the truth; it relates to what may be offered to others—which must be genuine; it relates to conduct in business—and we must be honest; it relates to the professions made—there must not only be a lack of pretense, there must be the utmost sincerity.

The native state of the mind calls for the true. Let it be illustrated: I knew a boy of five years to whom the mother often read. Upon one occasion she began a story. Before she had gone far the child interrupted her with the question, "Is it a true story, mamma?" Being in-

formed that it was probably just a story, he made this request, "Then read me a true story."

Here is illustrated the conduct of the mind in its native state. It seeks for the thing "that hath foundations." The psychic tentacles reach forth seeking nourishment from the true and the genuine, from the honest and the sincere.

The printing-press aided by telegraphy brings to our doors daily the happenings of the world. What does the social conscience want? What are the needs of the Christian young people? When outrages are reported, or famine conditions exist, or war is proposed, or a new cabinet is being formed, or treaties are being signed, or peace congresses are in session, or whatever is being reported, what the social conscience wants, and the Christian young people need, and the world is asking for are reports which conform to facts. Becoming exercised over some sensational account and afterward discovering it to be nothing more than the imaginings of some ingenius reporter, the mind recognizes the imposition, and self-respecting natures feel the outrage. Only depraved and sensational minds are attracted by "yellow journalism." Historic records lose their value as soon as they are discovered to be false.

People talk a great deal and there is no crime in conversation. The art of conversation is an accomplishment of high merit. Emerson teaches us that "conversation is the laboratory and workshop of the student." Care should be taken to avoid the accusation of Lowell when

he declares, "Our conversation is apt to run to words." Words cannot be recalled when once spoken. Confucius instructed, saying, "A blemish may be taken out of a diamond by careful polishing; but if your words have the least blemish, there is no way to efface it."

Whether we talk, write letters, dictate messages, report for the papers, speak in the forum, or declare any sentiment, it should all conform to fact.

Put an imperial guard at the door of the mouth. The gospel writers indicate that such a guard also should be kept at the ear-gate.

Many cautions have been handed down through the ages which if they be heeded will save us from much embarrassment, and it may be from more shame:

"Avoid profane and vain babblings."

"Neither give heed to fables and vain genealogies."

Nor turn "aside unto vain janglings."

"Refuse profane and old wives' fables."

"Strive not about words to no profit."

"Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth."

"Avoid foolish questions, and contentions, and strivings."

"Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile."

Continually pray, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."

There is no veto to be placed upon young minds reading fiction. It may be even more than a pleasant diversion. All fiction is not to be commended, for a vast deal of it is defiled, appealing only to the baser sense. Persons are not to be commended for investing the most of their reading time in this class of literature, even though it is of the highest type. "Fact is stranger than fiction." It is far more attractive, more inspiring and uplifting. The burden of one's study should be in the realm of the true. Fact, not fancy; truth, not fiction, these are the things developing the mind of the soul and improving the humanity of the heart.

A special commendation may be placed upon history study. It gives one a knowledge of the development of the race direct.

Go into a recorder's office of public documents and you will learn that when a document is filed for record it is expected to be copied into the books *verbatim et literatim* including punctuation marks and misspelled words. Only when it is thus recorded is it a true copy. Failure to copy a legal document correctly might involve serious complications and cause trouble.

Once upon going into a molding shop the workmen were found ready to turn out a large piece of iron. On being cooled it was put in shape for testing; but it was found not to fit. It would not do. It had been made from a new pattern, and the pattern not being correctly carved produced a flaw in the molding, and

the whole piece was useless, and had to be thrown aside as old iron.

A rule is worthless if it is violated at every turn. A theorem is not demonstrated when you are half through with the problem. The general appearance of a pattern may seem correct until it is put to the test. Machinery requires things to be exact. They must not approach the exact pattern; they must be just like the exact pattern. They must be true.

You go to the photographer to have your picture taken. When the proof is shown, you say, "That will never do!" "But wait till it is touched up and smoothed out," rejoins the photographer. By and by it is retouched, and some pictures are printed. How different now! It flatters you, making you appear really handsome. Such pictures you pass freely among your friends, and, ordering an extra dozen, you specially compliment the photographer. But, my dear friends, you cannot keep a high grade camera with a perfect lens from doing perfect work. It takes things just as they are; herein is its value. Of course the photographer may retouch the negative according to his customer's liking, but the photographer would not have an instrument in his shop that would produce negatives with the personal ear-marks of the customer left out. Such a camera would be returned to the factory within a week. The camera must produce pictures that conform to the subject. They must be exact pictures. They must be true.

It is wise to have but few intimate friends. A Chinese moral maxim runs this way, "There are plenty of acquaintances in the world, but very few real friends." You would not like to believe with Aristotle that "there are no friends." He who holds faithfulness and sincerity as first principles will have friends. Or as Emerson puts it, "The only way to have friends is to be one." But the person who follows you like your shadow when the sun shines, but leaves you the instant you cross into the shade, is not to be reckoned as a true friend. The friend that is worth while goes with you into the wilderness. He is a true shepherd following you far on the dark mountain of sin that he may redeem and bring you home in safety.

There are no words capable of describing the pain of heart consequent upon the discovery of a traitor among those whom you have thought were true and lasting friends.

It is an easy matter to make promises; and many there are who make them as if they really enjoyed seeing how much discomfort they might produce, and, in the making, they "will unsphere the stars with oaths." Beware of the one who is ever trying to prove what he is saying by a witness. There are men who are prompt to do what they say. If they fail they have a good reason and you can commiserate them. Their word is as good as their bond. And what is a promise worth if it is not worth the keeping? Human society is constructed after such

a fashion that it is impossible for us to get on in the world without putting confidence in one another. We must trust men. We must believe in men. Yet, withal, if men desire to be trusted they must prove themselves trustworthy; for in human society we desire to bind ourselves only to those who "are true."

The social fabric is so constructed that out from among us are called certain qualified persons to whom we delegate authority to make laws for us; to administer those laws; and to sit in judgment among us. Here is our opportunity to prove ourselves. They cannot perform the functions of their offices well except with our coöperation. They can call into judgment a few, but when the masses rebel against the authority vested in the officers, then appears anarchy, revolution, and society is no longer safe. The citizenship must show its faith in its country and its properly-selected officers. Sometimes officers are recreant to the confidence imposed in them. When officers "are true," there is no need for persistent investigations, and impeachments are unknown. Duty demands of us to think how we may promote the well-being of the social fabric; to study ways and means for the development of the public good; to set a premium upon fidelity to our selected officers; to obey the laws and to seek their enforcement; to show ourselves loyal to our country in times of peace as well as in war. In other words we are to be true men in every station in life.

In this present time there are many counterfeits. Manifold numbers deal in "green goods." That is the reason our banks emphasize the gold standard. They use paper money but sparingly. It is harder to discount gold than paper. When you receive your month's wages you insist on sound money. In buying and selling it is money that will pass in the markets of the world that you are after. You want to know that your dollars "are true."

Adulterations are common. Factories have their trade-marks. That trade-mark is protected by law. Penalties are prescribed for the defilement of certain articles of commerce. Going to the store and making a purchase, you want the pleasure of returning with the genuine article for which you called. The merchant who cares to build up a good and safe trade seeks to protect his customers against shoddy fabrics and adulterated groceries. It is not wise to deal at any store where you are required to keep a watch over the persons waiting upon the customers. Crowded orders and padded books may increase the profits, but will not build up a reliable business. When you go shopping you go to buy of the "whatsoever things are true."

The commercial conscience of the world is not as bad as it might be—as it has been. I think the same may be said of the political and social conscience of the world. In looking for a reason we have not far to go. The religious mind and conscience of the world have im-

proved. Christly principles are on the increase. The ethics of the world have inscribed the Golden Rule on the earth, the sky, and the sea. It is the leaven leavening the whole lump. The tabernacle of God is among men. Is he not dwelling with them? Are they not becoming his people?

This message is desired for those who have confessed Jesus Christ to be "Redeemer, Savior, and Friend." The ambition of your lives is to be like Christ. You hold your lives up to this plummet, *What would Jesus do?* You measure your thinking by his thinking. He inspires your sympathies. He corrects your errors. He stimulates your motives. Before your eyes he ever appears as your ideal pattern. To you he is a rock in a weary land. When the heart is broken you look to him for comfort. When friends prove false you come to him, "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Every time you turn your eyes to him, you see the One who is "true," and your heart craves to be like him. The cry of the heart is, "Oh, to be like him."

Turn with me to I. John 3 : 2 and read: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." This is your reward for faithful service, being "like Him." Have you this hope? Do you expect to be like your ideal? Somewhere along life's pathway Christ will appear; you will see him. You

may not know him. Why? You have not become like him. You want to become like him. Is not this your hope? Listen to these words, "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Clothe yourselves in the pure, clean robes of righteousness, and when he meets you along life's pathway you will recognize him, and know him, because you are like him. When he appears he will not disguise himself. "We shall see him as he is." Everywhere on him the stamp of "TRUE" will appear. He is the true Redeemer, Savior, and Friend whom we have trusted and confessed. And WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM. Then there will appear on me at every look the same stamp, "TRUE." You "ARE TRUE."

ARE HONEST

PLAIN, simple, unalloyed honesty is a virtue of high rank. In making a compass of Christain morality and in estimating the comparative worth of the elements comprehended, the worth of the things pertaining to the honorable which are deserving of self-respect are not to be placed at the foot. Certainly not if we agree with Pope in his "Essay on Man," saying, "An honest man's the noblest work of God."

Men with high sense of honor are not as numerous as they might be. They are not for number as the sand on the seashore, or as the stars in the heavens. In the crowds on the streets many are the passers-by who have not learned the first principles of well-fortified honesty. With them honor and reputation are tabooed. They estimate money to be of more value than integrity, and that cunning and craft shall stand above honesty.

This advice is given, that we should think upon "whatsoever things are honest," or are honorable, or reputable. Often stories are told of men, and sometimes of women also, who go among the slums of the great cities for no other purpose than that of sightseeing; in doing this they gain subjects for thought that are forbidding. They are cultivating a sense that

craves rude, vulgar, uncomely things to think upon. Men will go out of their way to get glimpses of the defiled things of life, and then will go away and talk about them. If one goes into the hard places of the earth on a mission of love and service, he goes, having "underneath the everlasting arms," holding him above that which contaminates, while he may minister to that which had been defiled, redeeming it to the high and holy life where honor dwells.

There are many things which suggest evil thoughts. They do not belong to the honorable. They are far from being reputable. This is not the place or the time to speak of them. However the personal character and life of the Christian are called upon to resist evil with righteousness. If one goes into forbidden places, he should go with the pure white light of a life consecrated to the exalted service of salvation, and not with the lambent flame of curiosity.

There are things that are honorable in the sight of all men, and these are things worthy of your consideration. When Paul instructed the Roman Christians (Rom. 12:17), saying, "Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men," he spoke in full knowledge of many evils existing in that great city and in the Roman government. His appeal was not that they should reform the government, either of the city or of the empire, but that they should take on the sublime virtues of the Christian faith. It was a tall idea then; it is as tall an idea now, taking thought for the things that are reputable,

honorable, high, and holy in the sight of all men.

In the presence of evil and all sorts of things dishonorable, rebuke them with purity and honesty. Live above them even though you may be compelled to live among them. You may find it necessary to resist evil; aye, you will find it necessary to resist evil many times; but again the admonition of the Apostle comes up, "Render to no man evil for evil."

Duplicity has not the first commendable characteristic. Be what you pretend to be, unless you pretend to be mean, and if that is your pretense, cease it at once, for a man cannot afford even the pretense of meanness in his life. The man who talks pious when the minister is in sight and otherwise when he is gone, is a man to be received with caution. Awhile ago I called on a young man who had resigned his position and was going away. The purpose of my calling was to make some inquiry into the work he had been doing and to know what was required of him. I learned a number of things, some of which I was sorry to know existed. The young man criticised, and with some bitterness, the methods employed by his superintendent, and complained of the very hard lot he had had under him, professing that if the work were not so hard and the hours so long, he would like to remain. A few days after his departure a letter was found which he had written awhile before going away, and, having been misplaced, it failed to get posted. It was written to a "dear

friend" and talked freely of his work, declaring that on the average he was not required to labor more than three hours per day. Up to this time it was supposed that what this young man had said was true, when in fact it was very false. It is uncomfortable to come even into the presence of a man who is double-faced. No one can afford the practice of double-dealing. It is not honest; nor can such a man be honorable.

Election times come round. Politics runs high. Aye, it rises to fever heat. Perhaps there are only two papers in the county seat. Manifestly the county is Democratic, yet in the turn of affairs the board of supervisors is divided with the Republicans in the majority. Those two papers may come to an agreement as to whom they will elect, or try to elect. Here the Democrats will pair off a man with a Republican there, and *vice versa,* clear through the ticket. And for what is this done? It is that each paper may have a creditable share of the county's printing. This sort of procedure is not uncommon. It is one of the methods employed, even though it may bear the imprint of disloyalty to the party each paper professes to represent.

It is not every transaction that will bear the scrutiny of the public gaze. Underneath the surface are evidences of a damaging nature against the lives of many.

Blackmailing is alien to brotherhood. Of what can men be thinking when they are preparing a list of their fellow men, fellow work-

men, using every endeavor to damage both business and characters? They cannot be thinking of the sublime teachings of the New Testament touching our relations. If they were they would cease to render evil for evil. They would take thought for the things that are honorable. Can one think of the boycott as being other than foreign to sympathetic human relations?

The class of employees is a large one. Perhaps you are one; if so, accept this word of counsel, Be true to your employer. There is no other gospel to proclaim. Being in the employ of another, you cannot remain thus and be honest without being true to him. Or to put it another way, You cannot be true to your employer and remain in his service without being honest. If you are asked to cheat, or lie, or in any wise deceive, you cannot do it and be true to him, no more than you can deceive, lie, and cheat, and be true to yourself. When called upon to represent your employer do not engage the privilege to exploit him. If he is not satisfied with honest service, there is just one course to pursue, and that is decline to serve him. In order to be true to your employer you must resign, and your resignation is absolutely necessary or you will be false to your own manhood.

There lived an ancient people of whom it was said, "Their honorable men are famished." Nor is it a story or myth. The record goes on saying, "Their multitude are dried up with thirst. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory,

and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth shall descend into it."

There is a good deal of evidence showing that the ancient record is being outdone in modern times.

Honesty is a cardinal virtue. Set it aside you may, but this will produce its own calamity. Many men have failed in business for the lack of this virtue.

"Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Nay, nay! Every tree after its kind.

My dear young friends, you will have temptations enough coming from without and you need not indulge the craft of sin by creating pitfalls and tripping devices for your own entanglement. Keep the scales properly adjusted so that neither you nor any man is deceived. In some clerkship to which you may be summoned "little tricks of trade" will be suggested; you had better suffer hunger than to sear your conscience by doing them. As a pupil you may be tempted to cheat in some school examination; as a dressmaker you may fail to secure your seams; as a contractor you may suffer temptation to put poor lumber in the building, especially where it will not be seen; as a reporter you may be tempted to color up your report after the manner of the sensational newspaper man. Wherever you are and in whatever business you engage, you will be subject to temptations of a peculiar nature, and they will take you unawares. Let me encourage you to begin hewing to the line. Keep your head above the waves.

"Ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men."

There are worse things than poverty and among them let avarice be named. It is a weed that will grow in a barren soil. It allies itself with dishonesty and dishonesty clings to it. It devours widows' houses and for a pretense makes long prayers. Avarice leaves behind a trail of cheating, of lying, of stealing, of tricks, of cunning, of any thing to get gain. Do you want such a record trailing after you to the grave?

You can afford to be poor, if that is your only and best way to an honorable life. You can afford to be poor, sleep on a board, feed on crusts, wear patches, have holes in your hat, and your shoes out at the toes, but you cannot afford to be dishonest.

"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold."

Character is of more value than money, and a "good name" and "loving favor" are but other expressions of the value of character. Character must be the aim, for herein does man attain possessions great and permanent. In the development of character, that which is honorable and reputable must be cultivated.

If you would grow corn, you must study to know the conditions of soil and climate favorable to the production of corn, and you must study to know what is your part of the work, and then you must labor to meet those conditions.

A life of honor and repute does not obtain by accident. The weeds must be kept out; new life must be grafted into it; proper cultivating and pruning must be done, before an excellent quality of fruit is produced. Honor does not grow out of conditions merely; it may be limited by environment, but, quoting Pope again, "Act well your part, there all the honor lies."

Men are what they want to be; what they make themselves to be. The rogue is a rogue because he willed to be mean, and cultivating meanness he developed into a rogue. A man is honest when he wills to be honest and cultivates honesty. It, therefore, behooves every one desiring the better things to fix his mind on them; think on them; seek them; make a conquest and achieve honesty as well as every other virtue entering into noble manhood. "Seek those things which are above." "Look up and not down." "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." Whosoever WILL may be saved. "Whosoever WILL, let him take the water of life freely." A man is what he wills to be. He is what he makes himself to be. He is not compelled to obey the dictates of his environments. The water-lily rooted in the muck and the mire blooms in beauty. The California deserts, at certain seasons of the year, are covered with many varieties of flowers rare and beautiful. A man does not have to live under the shadow of a church in order to achieve goodness. Within the sound of the college bell men may go wrong. Violets of the most exquisite

beauty have been seen to bloom under the thorny thicket.

The man who made his bean-sacks weigh forty-nine pounds instead of fifty, did it because he wanted to. The man who drank whisky, drank because he wanted to; he may not have wanted to lie in the gutter, but he wanted to drink all he could, and some one had to pick him out of the gutter.

"He that walketh uprightly walketh surely." He must think what he is doing. When you see a man living an honorable life in the presence of his fellows, you are certain that man is a man of understanding. He thinks upon all his ways. His mind goes before his words. His thoughts outline his path. He says: "As for me and my house, we WILL serve the Lord."

The honorable, reputable life is an achievement with thought as its fore-runner, and then that thought is wrought out in the every-day, earnest, watchful endeavor to "keep step with the Master."

Have this for your encouragement: "He that walketh uprightly shall be saved." "Those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth." "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." "Whatsoever things are honorable . . . think on these things."

ARE JUST

One of the disasters with which the United States of America is threatened, is a low sense of justness in all the relations of life. It is that low sense which suffers an epidemic of lawlessness with which our nation is menaced. Thoughtful men, who can read on the face of the sky the omen of grief, are giving diligence to the question, seeking if perhaps they may discover a remedy. There seems to be a conclusion—and it is very general—that the remedy rests largely, almost entirely, with the Church of Jesus Christ.

While this means that the ministry must play an important part in securing remedial grace, it does not mean that the laity are absolved from obligation, or that the young people should cease from seeking ways and means for the safety of the body politic.

Addressing myself primarily to young people, this needs to be said: You hold in your hands the weal or woe of the future. All you have to do is to speak the word and act it out, and this nation is safe, or it is imperiled. Your responsibility is so great it ought to make you begin to cry to God, "Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path."

The standard of righteousness which we employ is not modern constructions. The race has been a long while coming to its present standard. We are the old world worked over. We have organized some new combinations, but we have done it out of old elements. This word of caution is offered because young life is apt to lose sight of the evolution of things, becoming boastful of the newness of things that they are the product of the superior genius which now commands the world.

Let us not all at once get our heads among the stars, "for I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith."

Every nation is a great social compact; but nowhere does that agreement more closely relate the people than in the United States of America. We are all equally identified with the federal head, and loyal or not we are all sons of America. There is no governmental position to which we may not succeed.

Increasingly dear to every loyal child should be the welfare of the republic. Its institutions promoting liberty, freedom, industry, education, brotherhood, morality, religion should be cherished and guarded as the apple of the eye. The things appearing as barnacles, threatening the general good, should be resisted, hindered, and, wherever possible, prevented. What shall the

young people have to do with forwarding the prosperity and happiness of this great land?

There is no apology to make in speaking of this question. I am but one of a multitude desiring to quicken the conscience of the people and to strengthen the moral fiber.

Now this subject, "Whatsoever things are just," has to do with the personal righteousness of all. Society is composed of many units and the individual citizen is the integer. He counts one. The social standard can be no higher than the average ethical standard of the individuals. It is of the utmost importance that each young person should cultivate a sense of justness, of righteousness, of equity, of fidelity, of trustworthiness, of loyalty that will stand high pressure.

In order to raise the standard you must live above the average. To live below the average is to lower the standard. You are in danger of lowering the ethical standard by only living up to it. To raise the moral sense of righteousness, you must live a life that will outrank, in the scale of values, the lives of the most.

You have special duties toward society as a whole, and you must perform them without fear or favor. Your course must be as straightforward as it is possible to make it. You will meet men in the business realm, and will be tempted to yield to common business methods. You will have to meet methods that will cause you to question, and you must pass judgment upon them. "Can you do them and do right?"

You must answer the question for yourself. It will be harder to say, "No," when you come face to face with a given problem, than it may seem at a distance. It is like this: You go gunning, and you chance upon some fine game; but the law throws restrictions about the doe, or quail, or dove, and you cannot use your fowling-piece upon that game and remain guiltless before the law. Here is a place where you are tempted, but you dare not shoot.

If you would follow the example of a Joseph of Arimathea, having it said of you as of him, "He was a good man, and a just," there are some things commonly done in the business world you will be called upon to refuse. You will be jostled about a good deal; your faith will be tested; your honesty will be strained; your sense of the justness of things will be attacked; it will not be an easy road to travel. But you are not looking for an easy way through the world. If you are truly consecrated to righteousness, you will follow David's advice, admonishing you, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." He does not say anything about the manner in which it shall be brought to pass. The way may be hard enough, but being God's way it will be a sure and safe way.

Confessedly this way of righteousness is a way of faith. While you are encouraged to have faith in your fellows and in business methods in general, as well as in the government, you are exhorted to lay hold of God. "The

just shall live by faith." The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. Thus saith the Lord, "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Have faith in God. You will strengthen the faith of your friend; and from friend to friend will go this vital power, adding strength and courage, building up and fortifying the righteousness of the whole social realm. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Choose then the faith-walk. "The just shall live by faith." Put the emphasis where it belongs, "LIVE." Be a good man and you shall "LIVE."

This is a goodness which shall be positive in public as well as in private life. Officers of the law and judges of the courts need to study righteousness, and acquaint themselves with equity and justice. Indeed, nothing is more becoming in an officer, be he legislator, judge, or executor, than to be regardful of these two principles. It is not enough to be just, but he must love mercy, and in his life walk uprightly.

The Latins used to say, "Reason and authority are the two brightest lights in the world." Perhaps so; certainly unreasonable authority is a galling yoke to be resisted by any people. Fortunate is that community which can look the authority in the face with confidence. It is a blessing to be able to look up to the officers, saying, "These are honorable men; they are trustworthy; justice and equity are safe in their hands; they are strangers to impartiality; they speak and act the oracles of God."

Some of us are acquainted with men, called to responsible places, who refuse justice; nor is the law of equity discoverable among them. It is unfortunate that men having such a low sense of justness should ever be chosen for public duty; yet this is one of the unhappy tricks in popular government, that it is possible for men to gain public places who are unfit and incapable. But it has its remedy: There is a day of judgment for every inefficient, incompetent, unfit officer; at the ballot box he must "answer for the deeds done in the body," during his incumbency. This is the people's court where every man is an effective judge. "The voice of the people is the voice of God." When the people speak, it is God's oracle. We have full faith in Abraham Lincoln's aphorism, saying, "You can fool all the people some of the time; you can fool some of the people all the time; but you cannot fool all the people all the time." But when will constituted authority learn this valuable lesson?

"Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in mete-yard, in weight, or in measure. Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have: I am the Lord your God. . . . Therefore shall ye observe all my statutes, and all my judgments and do them: I am the Lord."

"Whatsoever things are righteous." The history of the development of our notions of righteousness—I mean our ideal notions—is one, if it were studied with painstaking diligence,

which would bring to light a beautiful progress revealing a sort of Jacob's ladder reaching up toward the skies and upon it the angels of God would be seen coming and going, ministering to human necessities.

The jurisprudence of the race began on a very risky site, but through centuries of pile-driving, ten great foundation-stones were put in position, and for centuries more upon them the race employed itself in the construction of ten great columns upon which came a temple of law; but its insufficiency was recognized in the chancery of heaven. It needed a fulfillment; then a deepening and broadening of its foundation. One was found to perform this incomparable task. With what wisdom and grace He did it, is known to all men. Experience, wisdom, love, mercy, sympathy, organization, instruction, direction, faith, hope, service, self-sacrifice, every godly virtue mingled in putting in place the gospel shaft from which life and immortality should radiate, and around which equity and justice should circle to the everlasting benefit of mortals. Let it be put after yet another manner:

The great temple of law-building out of the ages lacked spirit and soul. The sweetness of mercy was waiting conception. This need appealed to the Christ mind. He determined to fulfill the law by putting "grace and truth" on the throne. He made "primal duties," as Wordsworth says, "shine aloft like stars." He gave to humanity other and newer conceptions

of life. The morning star of brotherhood began to shine. Obligations binding in conscience gained recognition. His sword went to the heart of the *régime*. Revolutions were born. Governments were overturned. Religious liberty gained residence. Political liberty became a fact to be enjoyed among men. The dawn of industrial liberty was here. Righteousness is in the land. Equity is universally demanded, if not universally awarded; and, "the tabernacle of God is with men." It is gaining in its adornments; its usefulness is more and more acknowledged.

In perfecting the ethical standard of righteousness among men, some great and serious needs appear. Let some of them be mentioned:

One great need is, that men, in private life, should be like the cool, clear, health-giving fountain, trickling down from the granite mountains, quenching the thirst of bird or beast. Or, as Jacob Bachtel, a man of pioneer ministrations among the mountaineers of West Virginia, said of himself, "I want my life to be as clear as crystal, so that you might hang it on the horns of the moon and let the angels read it there."

Another great need is, that men, in business relations, shall hold that "a just weight is his delight," and that he will lay "righteousness to the plummet," and judgment to the line.

Another is, that, in politics, bosses, dictators, ward politicians, subverters of the public will,

traducers of the public conscience, so far as possible, shall be eliminated.

Still another is, that the demands of society shall be refused when they fail to conform to the high ethical standards suggested by the Golden Rule and the Sermon on the Mount. Society is coming up, but not fast enough, yet we must be as patient as possible.

Again, that legislators should cultivate conscience; should repeal all unjust laws; should enact laws conforming to the growth of the public conscience and to meet the needs of the body politic; should, at all times, have in mind the good and safety, the happiness and prosperity of their constituents, and the ultimate perfection of the race.

And, that our courts of justice, in their interpretations of law, should see to it that no one suffers wrong, and that the public good is also conserved; that equity and justice are righteously meted out; that "ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor"; and see to it that the nation's escutcheon is not defiled, nor its banners trailed in infamy.

And still again, that the executors of the law shall not oppress the people, or any part of the people; that they shall administer the law with impartiality; that they shall not wink at wrong in friend or foe, and stand impotent in the presence of known violations; that, remembering,

they are the trustees of the public peace, they shall see that the peace is not disturbed and that the public safety is not menaced.

And this contention obtains, that all our ways may become just and true, righteous and honorable, measuring up to this:

"Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small. Thou shalt not have in thine house divers measures, a great and a small. But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have: and that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

You will therefore see the necessity of taking thought for the things that are just and right, true and righteous. "Whatsoever things are just . . . think on these things."

ARE PURE

Society has a right to demand of us that we prove ourselves before much confidence is imposed in us.

The purposes and motives of my father may have been of the highest order, but until my purposes and motives are understood, I need not expect responsible business men to take stock in me.

Young men may do business for a little while on the good name of their parents, but it will not last long unless they can make a name for themselves. They must prove themselves to be men who are trustworthy; as the Corinthians were instructed by that master of letter-writers as well as preachers, "Proving ourselves . . . by pureness."

We are living in a day when manhood and womanhood are put to the test. The world has accepted the mandate, "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good." With respect to worthful manhood and womanhood, there is always an honorable and responsible place awaiting them. It is getting harder every day for men of low purpose and mean ideals to fill places of trust.

Society expects of those who gain the confidence of the public that they live above re-

proach, free from suspicion, avoiding the very appearance of evil.

I firmly believe it is easier to do right than it is to do wrong. I am certain that is the belief of almost the whole of humanity; but human nature wants to do some hard thing. The heart pants after the romantic. Anybody can do right, but it is not everybody who can beguile and entrap. The pent-up nature within the most of us seeks to do something out of the ordinary; something showing genius, skill, craft, demonstrating originality, proving that there is resident smartness. And just so, it is hard to begin the downward step. It requires an unusual amount of self-assertiveness for one to hold the reins in his hands and, regardless of consequences, drive whither he wills to drive. Having made the start on the down grade, momentum is gained with each revolution, and very soon it appears there is no way but the downward road. Man is more than an animal, a material thing, that he should be the subject of gravity!

It is a great and commanding achievement for one to live above suspicion. It is an achievement the most of us have failed of making. You may fail of that high standard. The failure may be the result of ignorance, but the public will very likely accept it as resulting from some other cause. Still the brave-hearted will not be put down. They will live until they have proved themselves to be clear and clean.

With open eyes and mind alert the art of

avoiding the very appearance of evil needs to be learned.

Society obligates us to avoid complicity in sin and crime. Other men sin, but we do not have to be partakers in their sins. We shall have enough of our own to bear and to suffer. To assume partnership with any other will increase the load. When one alone sins, the guilt is small compared with that when he sins with others. It is this partnership business in infamy against which society cries out, and should cry out the loudest.

Now let me speak more directly to the first meaning of this text, "Whatsoever things are pure." The first meaning of the word "pure," as here employed, is "chaste." It therefore relates to virtue with this distinction: Virtue is the unprofaned natural excellence in either man or woman, but especially in woman, while chastity opposes the violation of that most delicate law with which the propagation of the race has to do.

The life of the race is greatly vested in its baser nature. There are not many who are "whiter than new snow on a raven's back." Obsceneness and barbarous conduct are freely indulged. Man sins by what is lowest in him; woman sins by what is highest in her. However, there is no sex in chastity. Beauty of character suggests neither male nor female. Nature is not partial to sex. Unequal judgment is a result of nurture.

All flowers are fragrant and beautiful. The water-lily makes a mistake in criticising the dog-fennel. Widely different is the fragrance of the rose and the odor of the Yucca.

Did you think the olfactory nerve was an infallible guide? To some the fragrance of upturned soil rises like incense, while the ambrosial air from a flower-garden sickens at times. There are others who rather enjoy the smell from a glue factory, a brewery, a paper-mill, or a tobacco shop. Can you train the eye? So you can the nose.

Human judgment has been schooled to approve in man what it condemns in woman. It recognizes a double moral standard. Sin in woman brings shame and disgrace. Man sins, rising in honor and in fame. She retires with confusion of face; he proceeds bearing a "stainless name."

Who is to blame? To blame! Humanity! Not man only; not woman only; both!

The sexes employ a unity of judgment, demanding of woman a sinless life. Should she be betrayed, the common judgment of man and woman is, she must seek the side streets, the dark alleys, and sub-cellars. On the other hand, but little is required of man.

Is man a dog that he should be allowed to feed upon his wanton uncondemned?

Virtue is virtue and is not transferable. It is the strength and beauty of the soul. It is Heaven's choicest gift. It is a wealth that never encumbers. It is brave, has courage, is

full of vigor. Its theater is the conscience. Its sinews are good company and chaste conversation.

I call men to judgment for requiring of womanhood that virtue and beauty of character which they themselves do not attain, or hold as fundamental in society.

I call women to judgment for encouraging in man that low moral life, which, when it obtains in any of their own sex, is just cause for ostracism.

What woman of you, or man, on seeing a woman about the streets with a cigar in her mouth, or a pipe in her hand, or chewing tobacco, or lounging about the street corners, or frequenting saloons, would hold such a woman in esteem? And yet the ordinary girl will permit a young man to walk the streets, or to sit on the porch, and not infrequently enjoy the parlor with her, with a cigar or cigaret in his mouth, and she offers not the least objection. She may even go so far as to express her liking for the fragrance of tobacco smoke.

Some women do smoke and chew and rub snuff, and are as worthy of respect as the men doing the same things. To me the sight is anything but beautiful of any one either chewing or smoking. Not only is it not a welcomed sight, but it is positively vulgar.

It is an offense against good breeding, if not against womanhood, for a grocer, a dry-goods man, or merchant of any character, to smoke or to allow smoking in his store; but to this

common evil, who of the women offer objection? Yet were such offense committed by lady clerks, milliners, chambermaids, stenographers, or girls doing service in public places, they would be derided, sneered at, banished, and men and women would say, "Her punishment was just."

Fie on such justice! There is no sex in virtue. Society is wrong, and our customs are unequal. Sin is sin, committed by man or woman.

Here is a young man of a good family. He has some property, but he is a dissipated character. He wastes his virtue and destroys his manhood. He breaks his mother's heart and feeds his salacious appetite. Exhausted with drink and bestial living, he comes home and dies. The entire community knew how he lived and died, and yet they turn out *en masse* to do him homage and weep over his lecherous remains.

Here is a young woman of good family. She was as pure as an angel, but was tempted and fell. Hear her:

"Once I was pure as the snow, but I fell,
Fell like the snowflakes from heaven to hell,
Fell to be scoffed, to be spit on and beat—
Fell to be trampled as filth in the street—
Pleading—cursing—dreading to die,
Selling my soul to whoever would buy;
Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,
Hating the living and fearing the dead.
Merciful God, have I fallen so low?
And yet I was once like the beautiful snow."

She died! Is it any wonder? She was buried. Who were there? The undertaker and

the grave-digger. The box was of rough pine. The hearse was a dray. The burial-place was the potter's field. There was none to pray. Not a tear was shed. Silently she sleeps beneath the scorn and judgment of a cruel world!

Some one has said: "Woman always falls by what is highest in her—love—'he wants me.' Man, on the contrary, sins by what is lowest in him—lust." Is it true? And is the reward of blasted love the potter's field, while lust lies down in honor beneath a granite shaft?

I see a mother in tears. She has six beautiful girls. They are the pride of her life and the cheer of her home. Then why in tears? This is the reason: Just across the street is another home with two accomplished daughters. Over the face of the eldest a look of shame has crept, and the reason is known. The burden of the mother's heart is, "If my neighbor cannot keep her two daughters inviolate, what can I do to keep my six girls as pure as snow and as chaste as ice?"

A young man can shield himself with a hundred paltry dollars, but if a young woman sins her shelter is in hades!

Chasteness is the chief protection to domestic felicity. "First God's love and next the love of wedded souls." But that wedded life is a false union where impurity links itself with purity. "No virgin girl can give her best love to any man who has lost his honor."

Between the virtuous and the misleading

there is a chasm wide as between the healthy tissue and the slough!

When Sam Jones wanted a wife, he said he went to the prayer-meeting. That was very good for Sam, but how about the wife?

The divinity of companionship receives universal recognition. It demands both virtue and honor, a pure man and a chaste woman.

When schools abound with filthy boys, and cities are full of low men, what chance is there for a virtuous girl to wed a pure man and have a happy home? Boys cannot run wild enjoying street liberties, listening to foul mouths, feeding on filthy literature, beholding the unchaste and the infamous, without breathing the spirit of it all. "Evil communications corrupt good manners," and evil associates corrupt good morals.

Who are the crucified of to-day? They are the Christ-women born in virtue, reared in purity, accomplished in ladyship, wedded to the impure, low, mean, lustful manhood of the age. To be loved? How can they be loved? How can they love that which is not only unlovable, but despicable? And yet these poor sisters of Jesus Christ will suffer on, enduring the most unendurable unto the end.

Who are the crucified of to-day? Go among the scarlet women and see. Heaven forbid! Have they deliberately chosen this life? First they were betrayed, and after that there was nothing left but infamy, shame, and disgrace. Society says, "Depart from me, ye cursed." The

church folds about itself the robes of self-righteousness, fearing the touch of one of them. No one takes note that

"Down in the human heart,
Crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore."

Society, the church, all are cold-hearted toward an erring sister. Ah, worse; they have but one voice, and that is: "Out of sight with her! Out of sight! Away with her! Down!" Our soulless voices must be obeyed! We do not believe that,

"Touched by a loving heart,
Wakened by kindness,
Cords that were broken will vibrate once more."

If we do believe that, we disprove it by our actions, declaring we have no time to mend broken pitchers or to string old fiddles; but our outcry is,

"On with the dance! Let joy be unconfin'd."

I hear a retort: "Are you not teaching us," say a multitude, "to think on the pure? And yet you criticise the church and society for turning from the scarlet woman, from defamed nature. It would be well to be consistent."

Very well, let us be consistent. To the pure-minded there arises a deep sense of pity for the "some mother's child" that has gone astray. Now purity wants all things to become pure. At once it goes about delivering the hopeless and the erring. You were once in sin. Who saved you? You were once being entrapped. Perhaps you did not know it; it may be you

have never known it, and yet some kind angel hand rescued you from the very verge of shame and infamy to which you had unconsciously approached. Thus a father's daughter was being led, unknowing, into the very jaws of death and into the very mouth of hell, when a noble, pure-minded man, seeing the girl being led straight toward a door of shame, hastened to the rescue. Is it not possible for the "pure in heart" to rid every community of the bagnio, and deliver the poor sisters of Jesus Christ from shame? Ay, let us be consistent. Let us be like our Captain—"tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin," going forth and saving them "to the uttermost that come unto God by him," "proving ourselves . . . by pureness."

Give God the best. Hear me; give God the best. He is asking for your best service. Be as near like Christ as you know how. Stand for the church and all that is good and pure. Stand for the home and all that is gentle and chaste. Stand for God and all that is best and holy. Stand for the despised and all who are clothed in the garments of shame, that you may minister deliverance "in His name." If you have to stand alone, stand in the fear of God and in the power of his might. "In all things approve yourselves to be clear." "Whatsoever things are pure, . . . think on these things."

ARE LOVELY

NATURE abounds in captivating beauties. Wherever you go you are met with a smile. There are no tears; not as much as a sigh. From whatever angle you look, the face of nature is fair. Owen Meredith says, "How light is thy heart," but Wordsworth tells us the truth when he says, "Nature never did betray the heart that loved her." Light and gay she may seem, but with Tennyson "nothing in nature is unbeautiful." Go to the seaside, or climb among the hills, whichever place, nature's heart beats strong; everywhere you are impressed with the touch of nature's genial glow. The seasons come and go clothed in white, appareled in green, adorned in crimson, crowned with gold, tinted with an infinite variety of colors budding and blooming.

I grant that some things are more entrancing than are others—they seem so to me, but the orthodoxy of that "seem so" depends upon me. Perhaps in the mind of the Infinite it is all beautiful. In creation it was said, "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."

To me the beauty and goodness of things seem very dependent. Still, I cannot say upon what they depend, except upon me. The human

mind grades things, compares them, estimates them. It is all done in a very arbitrary manner, but still it is done, and we insist that we are right. If we are right, our chief study should be to enswathe ourselves in the heart of that which is most beautiful and most worthful. "Whatsoever things are lovely."

The most beautiful and worthful thing in all the creations known to man is man. He is a part of nature, but he is the climax of nature. He is a creature of "dominion." More than anything else, he studies himself and marvels!

Ideality tells him to devote himself only to that which is lovely in his associates.

We can see many unattractive elements in the people with whom we daily associate. Indeed we do see them, and criticise; we are not sparing in our censure.

This is what we do, and I want here to say it is what we should not do. Ideality puts the best interpretation on what we see and know in others. Too much that is beautiful and entrancing presents itself for man to give attention to the rude, the ugly, the vulgar.

We are all members of the social order. We are daily in the presence of some. How shall we look upon those whom we meet? Above all other things try to see that which is lovely in them.

There are very crude elements in some of the people we have for associates. Is this true? If it is, and we think upon the crude, vulgar elements more than upon the resident virtues, we

shall be lowered to the plane of those same crude, vulgar people. Being ambitious to grow into the best types, one must avoid the worst types.

A peculiar trait in human beings is to form habits. I do not mean to make reference to those habits of life that belong to us by nature, but to those which are acquired, wherein prevailing dispositions, feelings, actions, or physical temperaments are indulged, petted, trained, nourished, until they become abnormal parts of our personal conduct. Now the hazardous feature of this is found to be that when we see in others habits attractive or otherwise, we immediately begin to draw a pattern and fashion ourselves accordingly.

Habits are contagious. They are as contagious as is smallpox. It requires a strong will to keep one free from forming the habits which appear in others. But there are desirable habits, and in forming habits it is well to form desirable ones in ourselves. However, there must be a distinction made in the habits which appear. A thing is not right because we have habitually done it. We may do a great many unlovable things, but the things that are lovable, or, as the Greek would say, "the things that are very lovely," are the things which should command our attention and should insinuate themselves into our lives.

The faculty of intercommunication is one upon which we should place a high estimate. To talk together, to hold conversations, to dis-

cuss important themes, to interchange ideas, to inform one another, to make known our needs, our wishes, our purposes, our ambitions—these are our privileges. Are they not worth cherishing?

There is much which passes for conversation that is consummate doggerel without a poetic tinge.

A friend, in speaking of another, said: "I always love to hear Wyant talk. He is eloquent in common conversation." Some of us have not been thinking it was worth while giving attention to the "words of our mouths," much less to the "meditations of our hearts."

A commendable feature of the public-school work is in keeping a record of the "oral expression" of the pupils. The language of the home should be crystal with purity.

In conversation with a business man a story was introduced by saying, "It is a little smutty, but I would like for you to hear it." I replied, "Then I guess you had better not tell it," and out of deference to my feelings upon the matter, he refrained. We have not time to indulge in base words, none of us; in doing so we prove ourselves to be a back number. Three thousand years ago there lived a poet who wrote a meditation which every one would do well to graft into his life. Said he, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."

"Whatsoever things are very lovely" in thought, cause them to become a real part of you. I know a very miserable man, made so because he has cultivated miserable thinking. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

There are many "lovable" personalities. It is not enough that a man shall be handsome. Beauty of complexion and stature made Absalom to excel and raised Saul a head above any of his brethren. It is said of Cleopatra that in her person she "beggar'd all description." I know a very lovable personality of whom a friend once remarked, "She is painfully homely." "Beauty is as beauty does." Like Socrates, "I pray thee, O God, that I may be beautiful within."

Among our friends it is quite impossible for us to correctly interpret the motives prompting them in many of their undertakings. We are apt to do a grave injustice to the person to whom we would be the farthest from doing any injury. The reasons that prompted to action on his part may be hidden from view, and we are left to wonder, if not in amazement. Yet it is proper that we should make a study of the motives which are reckoned as resident back of certain choices.

After ten years of absence, in which one of the men changed his church relations, two friends met, and the other one, in commenting upon the change, said, "I knew you did right, or it would not have been so." He saw virtue in his friend's motive in choosing between two

denominations. He saw "that which was lovely" in his friend's motive.

I remember being taught this, "Put the best possible construction upon what others may say or do." For motive is the cause of action, and you want to see the good, the true, the beautiful in the moving power spurring a friend to action.

The purpose is the object of action. In most procedure there is an end in view. Some object is pointed out and the energies are directed toward that object. Some need appears and all one's energies are directed to the accomplishment of that need. What is the end in view? Surrounded with neighbors and friends who are ever busy doing something, we shall find ourselves unconsciously studying their motives and their purposes. Let it be so; and would any of us have it otherwise? In determining the cause of action and the motive of action in others, we find fuel to feed our own cause and object of action. Between the causes and objects of action we will find material out of which to make selections for our own personal uses.

After all, character counts. It tells just what one is. And out of the manifold characters surrounding us we are called upon to choose the best. Select from our friends their virtues and emulate them; shun their vices; avoid their evil habits; select their good points and study them. It may be we can incorporate their excellences into our own lives, and in doing so improve ourselves.

Strong men and good men have their excellences rooted and grounded in strong and good elements of character. They gather nourishment from the best things appearing in the lives of others.

Our privilege is as great as theirs. Let us study those about us. Note their good conduct; select their beautiful habits; take lessons in their conversation; tax the brain with their wholesome thoughts; seek to be as beautiful within; fortify ourselves with their lofty motives; keep their worthy object in view; sift everything, holding on to the "whatsoever things are very lovely."

Hold on to your friends. You cannot get along without them. They may have vices—cling to their virtues; you need them. The fibers of your character must inevitably secure nourishment from the associates of your life. Look to it that your nature feeds on the good things appearing in the lives of those environing you. By so doing you will grow tall in the excellences of human life.

ARE OF GOOD REPORT

All information deserves sifting. If it sifts perfectly, and nothing is lost, you are reassured with respect to the correctness of the matter. If it sifts imperfectly, much is gained, in that what is untrue and does not conform to fact is cast out, only the trustworthy and the true remaining. It matters not from what source definite information comes, you must pass judgment upon it, retaining only what is "of good report."

You must distinguish between a thing's being true, simply true, and "of good report." Many things are true that are not of good report. A banker has defaulted; a government employee has proven untrue; a well-known man wastes his income; another has been the subject of foul play. These and many other things may be very true to fact, but they are not of good report, and hence they are not the things you would select to feed upon in order to strengthen the moral fiber of the soul.

A thing is of "good report" when it credits virtue, sustains manhood, upholds honor, is self-respecting, puts a premium upon righteousness, maintains integrity, fosters bravery, stimulates frugality, cultivates charity, and upbuilds morality. It is therefore the part of wisdom to

pass all reported information through a screen in order to determine what is worth while. He who neglects sifting will load up his bin with a quantity of chaff.

Pick up an ordinary newspaper and examine it with care. What do you find? There is a bit of real news, but most of the contents of the paper is of no value. A bit of news is strung out into a story, and that which fills a column might easily be reduced to a stick.

It is estimated that there are fifty thousand newspapers published in the world. What per cent. of these publications is news? Perhaps three per cent. goes for genuine news. It is impossible to tell, but a fair estimate will not increase this figure so much as some might think.

Of this fifty thousand, 21,305 are produced in the United States of America and Canada. We American people must be kept very busy determining just what the news is. Certainly we are made busy sifting through the columns of more than twenty thousand journals in order that we may keep ourselves posted upon the current events of the times.

The book publications of the world annually approximate 80,000. Fiction, drama, and popular literature, like Ben Adem, lead all the rest. Law, theology, and medicine follow in order as named. It is not expected that the fund of information contained in these 80,000 different books shall be reliable. Much of the fiction fails to be respectable rubbish. Many

of the law books are inconsistent in their statements. Books on theology are as different in their deductions as it is possible for books to be. Medical authorities are in no better agreement. Scientists abound in speculations, and books on philosophy are often far from the truth. This vast amount of new literature coming from the press each year will stand lots of screening and sifting. Indeed it is wonderful what little of real merit is secured from many a popular book!

The ancient preacher said, "Of making many books there is no end." When he made that statement the books produced were small and insignificant in the quantity of matter usually put into books as compared with the amount of matter contained in the issues of the press nowadays. Fifty thousand papers and eighty thousand books from the press each year! And many of these papers in a single issue could print the whole of the New Testament and abundant space would be left for current news! If the papers were counted as books,—and employing Solomon's basis of judgment it would be safe to so count them,—then the world would have about 80,000 books plus a large multiple of fifty thousand. This is the gauntlet required to be run every year, and many days in the year, if one would be able to keep apace with all the things "of good report" coming from the press. But in order to secure the things "of good report," this brings to us the suggestion that we are to busy ourselves, and

to keep ourselves busy, rummaging among the countless publications with an interrogation point.

Foolish is the man who tries to keep up with the procession of publications, even among his own countrymen. A busy man in a busy world where everything goes on wheels and moves at the suggestion of electricity, can hope to read only a few papers and magazines and books. Many wiser men than we have advised us that a book is not worth the time it takes to read it because it just came from the press. Newness is no recommendation. The apostles of the best thought and life have taught us not to read a book until it has been from the press at least a year. This suggestion commends itself to the busy person.

A wife and mother recently poured out her heart to her pastor concerning the drift of her husband's mind and thought, and was disparaging the outlook. This inquiry was made, "What does your husband read?" and she made reply, "Oh, nothing but trash." Here is a part—a significant part—of the solution to the difficulty in that home. The mind deserves wholesome diet. Nothing is too good upon which to feed the mind.

There are other means of securing information, chief among which is that of letter-writing. Letter-writing has been reduced to an art, and the transportation of mailing matter has been greatly simplified. Through the post-offices of the world it is estimated that 20,000,000,000

letters pass each year. The postal system has enjoyed a beneficent evolution throughout the inhabitable parts of the world. For the small sum of five cents per half ounce the post-offices of the world will pass along a private message from the humblest citizen to any part of the known world, giving to the message an escort having the protection of every government through which it may be required to pass in reaching its destination. The mails are otherwise safeguarded, and any one found guilty of transmitting indecent or obscene matter through the mails is subject to penalty. Still letters need to be sifted. Their contents are not always reliable. Here is an illustration:

A real estate agent in a town of about 2,500 people, and with a horse-car street-railway, desiring to boom his community, sent out much printed matter, and when he secured responses, was diligent in making reply by private letters. To one such person a letter was written telling that the population of the said town was 16,000, and stating that they had an electric street-railway. Imagine the disappointed look coming over the faces of the emigrants as they stepped from the train into a small town of 2,500 population, at whose depot stood a prehistoric horse-car, to which a couple of quadrupeds with shaggy manes, artistically carved ribs, knees sprung, and otherwise anciently adorned, were hitched, ready to move on toward the busy scenes of Main Street.

I once had a correspondent, and he knew how to write an interesting letter. It was in the days when we were both about to pass out of our teens. Something had gone wrong with my correspondent which angered him exceedingly. He told me of it, using language of an unbecoming nature. In making reply I did not hesitate to reprove him, letting him know such letters were not welcomed. Instead of receiving my reproof,—which may not have been given with wisdom,—he resented it with spirit, and in his reply vigorous language was used which is not allowed in decent society, and which violated the postal laws. I simply informed him that our correspondence was at an end.

"Whatsoever things are of good report." There are the telephone, the telegraph, the wireless, the heliograph, and other signal methods by which information is transmitted. Perhaps the most frequent violations of good breeding occur at the telephone. A girl in the exchange once said in my hearing, "You can always tell who among the habitual users of the system are gentlemen." And then a certain man was named, of whom, though engaged in an unmanning business, yet over the telephone, the exchange girl said, "He is a gentleman." The girls in the exchange may not always be courteous, but the man with the receiver at his ear cannot afford to be discourteous. Character speaks over the telephone, though you may be miles away.

This is not all. Most of us talk too much. There is a liking to report upon our neighbors. "Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people." "He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets," which "are as wounds" "that goeth down into the innermost parts." "Where there is no whisperer the strife ceaseth." "Thou shalt not raise a false report."

A great deal we know is what some one has told us, but here we are called upon to exercise our sifting faculty again. It would save us a deal of time and trouble were we freed from this annoyance, but what we lose in time we gain in character, if we gain at all. Each one must be himself, if he would be anything of value; and being himself, he must weigh all "hearsay" with care and caution.

A half-drunken man remarked to the policeman as he approached, "D'u see-e-e; th'r' 'r' two moons up th'r'." And the policeman replied, "Don't believe half you see, and nothing you hear."

To sane, sober people the caution carries some weight. Much you see is not so—certainly not good to look upon, and much more that you hear is incredible. "Take heed therefore how ye hear." But, "let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." "Whatsoever things are of good report, . . . think on these things."

"Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness,

and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor."

IF THERE BE ANY VIRTUE

LET us give this another reading: If there be any strength of body or mind; if there be any force in a given personality; if there be any virtue, think on these things.

You are asked, therefore, to give attention to the physical basis of life. I am not at this time asking you to inquire into the life itself, but to the physical basis of the life which now obtains. And where does it come from? Let me make answer. It "comes from the natural man and the kingdoms below him."

If the physical basis of the life which now obtains comes from the natural man and the kingdoms below him, the attention—studious attention—should be given to the laws governing the continuity of that physical basis of life. Let me say it in still another way. If what has gone before is true, then I would admonish you to thoroughly acquaint yourself with the law of heredity.

But young Christians desire the simplification of this that is called heredity; and I think it ought to be made exceedingly plain and simple. This is vital to every young person and is worth understanding. If you will then give attention to the following statement, read it

and reread it, think it over again and again, light may come to you:

The law of heredity takes that which is transmissible in the parents and hands it on to the child, which child, in parenthood, may transmit it to the next generation, and in like manner it may be passed on, becoming a part of succeeding generations.

It is well to keep in mind that nature is consistent. As Leibnitz says, "Nature never makes leaps." That which has gone before is not cast aside as if it were no longer of value, but it is transmitted, becoming a part of that which is and that which is to be.

Strength and weakness are alike transmitted. Like begets like. To breed out the weaknesses requires the effort of breeding stronger traits of character. If a weak personality weds a weak personality, the issue will show manifest weakness. If a weak personality weds a strong personality, the issue may show manifest weakness or manifest strength, according as weakness or strength may dominate the period. If a strong personality weds a strong personality, their offspring are likely to be endowed with strength. This is a subject that should gain the attention of every young man and every young woman. It is vital. And let me go further, telling why it is a vital subject.

You will be determining upon life companionships by and by, and there are some things which you should not allow to escape your most careful attention. I do not mean you are to

sit in judgment upon the person under consideration, making an effort to determine how many weak points that person sustains; but you are to discover the virtues of that person, to see whether they are enough to warrant your further consideration of companionship. The study takes another form also.

There should be a study of the combined points of strength resident in you both. Your study proceeds after this manner:

(1) You determine what the virtues of your own life are.

(2) You discover the virtues of the life of the other person.

(3) You make a comparative study of the virtues of both, seeking to know about how the two temperaments will blend in a possible offspring. These are legitimate points for the consideration of every candid student of marital relations.

It is perfectly natural that this subject should arise, commanding the attention of young men and women. When once it does arise, unless the persons have been carefully warned, they will become so intensely interested that advice at such a time might not be listened to. The probabilities are it would be treated with light consideration. For this reason I dare to speak in this familiar manner. I do not mean that you are, or might be, unreasonable, but infatuation has a tendency to blind the senses and subvert good judgment, therefore it is wise to have the counsel given when

it may not seem to be needed, that when you do discover yourself being drawn by some irresistible affinity of soul to soul, you will exert your will power and call your good sense to the throne that you may take advice with yourself.

May it not be that courtship is misunderstood by most persons? I do not know what your judgment upon the matter is, nor could I imagine just how you would define courtship, were you called upon for such a definition. I am going to take the liberty to give you a definition which I think sufficiently clear and comprehensive to be suggestive and helpful to any of you who may contemplate it with discrimination. Will you hear it?

Courtship should be the judicious inquiry by two persons of opposite sex into the natural affinity discovered to exist between them.

Parents and guardians alike might be allowed to take a part in this inquiry. It is their natural right. Indeed it would be the part of a wise person to take the whole subject, and persons concerned, to the parents and with them canvass the matter without haste. Should this not be done, certainly the persons themselves should with careful study make this inquiry, in order that the kindred elements in their psychic natures might be understood and their physical strength be known. "If there be any virtue."

This natural affinity discovered to exist is both biological and psychological.

When two persons of the opposite sex discover that the physical bases of their lives are coördinate, then biological affinity may be said to obtain.

When two persons of the opposite sex discover that the spiritual entities of their psychic lives are akin, alike, coördinate, and there obtains between them an attraction which, with the least encouragement, increases in its force, and may result in the two minds being indissolubly united, then psychological affinity may be said to obtain.

The union of two persons is most nearly perfect when that union results from that affinity which is both biological and psychological.

This subject is one of the most vital in character. It is one which should concern you. It is too sacred to be treated with jest. It is fundamental to the social well-being of the race. You should know about it. You should study to know more about it than you already know.

In the United States of America the marital relations are not held with universal sacredness. There are not a few who hold that marriage is simply a compact, a social partnership, an alliance for convenience. It is a relation with them in which God is left out, as if he had never consecrated marriage.

The foundations of the home were securely laid. The principles underlying domestic happiness are fixed, and they are as enduring as is the human race. You should seek them out

that you may know them, and, knowing them, never be guilty of their violation.

If the institution of marriage were man-made, then man might enact laws which would modify or even annul the relation. But man did not institute the marriage relation. God made it sacred and holy. Before human laws were made, or ever man had thought upon legislation, God consecrated the home. As Sylvanus Stall, D.D., has put it: Marriage "antedates human legislation," and "is above all human legislation. It was ordained of God and has been made indissoluble by any court or for any cause whatsoever, save for the single cause of adultery."

There is no thought of saying everything that might be said, or that it might be well to say, upon this subject. I would rather be suggestive only. These are things for you to think upon. If there be any virtue; if there be any force; if there be any strength of body or mind, give them your study.

"Forsake the foolish and live, and go in the way of understanding." "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise." "The life is more than meat, and the body than raiment." "Commit thy ways unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord." "The path of the righteous is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

With equal force you may apply this part of the text to other phases of life, but for this present I am content to put the emphasis upon the law of heredity, and upon the consistency of nature in maintaining that law, and these should admonish all, especially the young, to study with care the affinity of soul with soul, that the best results may obtain in the future generations. Do not treat this subject with jest. It means more to you than of which you are conscious. It means more to the generations to come than you have dared to imagine or dream. Here is a place to pause, and to think, and to ask advice, and to pray. If there be any virtue.

IF THERE BE ANY PRAISE

PRAISE! That 's the word—praise! If there be any ground for commendation, give it. There is great soul-hunger for this simple commodity. It does not cost much to give it; it is worth a great deal when honestly bestowed. "Praise is comely for the upright."

Anybody can criticise! Anybody! It requires neither grace nor sense. A peanut for a head and a stone for a heart, and you have all that is necessary to develop an adept critic. It is not criticism folks stand in need of nearly so much as it is a word of cheer.

At one time during the War of the Rebellion a chaplain was about to address his men. The soldiers were tired, and worn, and discouraged, and one of them made a quiet suggestion, saying, "Chaplain, give the boys a word of cheer." That soldier saw the need, and gave the key.

Ian Maclaren tells the story of a widowed mother taking leave of her only son. He could not speak, and her voice was failing fast. This she said: "I canna see ye noo, John, but I know yir there, an' I 've just one other wish. If God calls ye to the ministry, ye 'ill no refuse, an' the first day ye preach in yir ain kirk, speak a gude word for Jesus Christ, an', John, I 'll

hear ye that day, though ye 'll no see me, and I 'll be satisfied."

What that dying mother asked of her only son, the living Evangel asks of you—"Speak a good word." It matters not where it is spoken, or who hears it, it is the same as giving a cup of refreshing water. A kind deed, a loving word, a gentle look, a little comfort, done in the name of the Master, will bring a blessing. It produces a double blessing: the one receiving it is cheered; the one giving it is blessed; both are comforted. This is speaking a good word for Jesus Christ.

Praise given should be true to character. The flatterer is to be disregarded. "A flattering mouth worketh ruin." Quoting another, "Praise undeserved is scandal in disguise."

I read once about a king making a speech to his subjects, and the people greatly flattered the king, saying, "It is the voice of a god, and not of man." The miserable, notorious king was pleased with this praise,—and scandalized,—for it was far from being true. "And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."

Commendation should not be given when it is not true. It is not necessary that one should turn into a linguistic spendthrift, and, without regard to worthfulness, give praise when praise is not due. "If there be any praise," give it, and do not withhold. Recognize merit. Com-

mend virtue. Sustain honor. See the good, and tell it abroad. "Praise is comely."

Praise, or the lack of it, reveals the character of the one giving or withholding it. It is an index to character. The praiseworthy manner in which one speaks of his fellows tells of the kindly heart the one speaking sustains. The absence of it when it ought to be given also indexes character. There are so many things we do, and leave undone, which tell to others the kind of persons we are. "Be sure your sins will find you out." But a man's virtues speak with equal emphasis and with the same certainty. The words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts are fruits of the soul, and they show forth the kind of trees we are.

This is an art worthy of cultivation. Just why it is not appreciated more remains a mystery. It is not expensive. It is always accessible. Any one can find occasion to bestow praise. As Shakespeare, in "Macbeth," makes Duncan say of Malcolm, "In his commendations I am fed; it is a banquet to me." It would be difficult to find a person who had no appreciation of such bestowments. It is like pumpkin pie on a Thanksgiving Day. And pumpkin pies are not hard to make! All that is needed is the regulation pie-crust, a given amount of pumpkin sauce, spice, salt, sugar, eggs, and milk; these properly proportioned, and baked with care, can easily be learned, and you have pumpkin pie! It takes a small amount of time; a bit of application. It is as easy to

learn the art of giving praise; and when one considers the amount of cheer and comfort granted thereby, it would seem criminal to withhold this blessing. Then, again, the cultivation of the same puts a bit of polish upon the character. It gives evidence of refinement.

Can you understand the reason praise is withheld many times when it ought to be given? Think it over and give your conclusion. And what do you think the reason is? I have tried to solve the question to the satisfaction of my own mind. I think I have discovered a reason. To me the reason has virtue in it. You may not agree with me, but my conclusion may offer a suggestion to you at any rate, and, thinking so, I offer it for what it may be worth to you:

The reason we are not more willing to bestow praise is because base ingratitude is so deeply rooted in our natures.

"Our praises are our wages." Then poor are the wages of many! If many a mother could but have a word of cheer and kind recognition from those who are near and dear to her, she would be able to bear her burdens and they would not seem half so heavy. Children are often thoughtless, but it is a crime to be thoughtless toward our mothers. They deserve our tenderest recognition. Schoolboys and girls think because they are busy with their lessons, having only a limited time to themselves, that they should be excused from helping their mothers, and many mothers do excuse them. It is a tribute to self-sacrificing motherhood,

but it is a self-sacrifice that may not be worth the price. School-books should not be allowed to take all the time of the child away from the performance of some home duties. Learning to work is as necessary as learning the kings of England, or the Latin subjunctive, or gaining a comprehensive knowledge of language and literature. Whatever else a child may be taught, let him be taught to be kind, helpful, thoughtful, praiseful toward his parents. "Sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child."

Could you have a friend nurse you through a spell of sickness, and you not have the disposition to speak personally to that friend showing the gratitude of your heart for what he had done for you in the time of your need?

Could you sit at the table of another for weeks, and even months, accepting a gratuity of board and lodging, and have the hardness of heart not to thank the one who prepared your meals and made your bed and put out your wash gratis?

Did you never observe how willing most folks are to have you lose sleep, spend money, expend energy, sacrifice time, even waste your life for their sake, and they have not so much as a "Thank you" to offer?

None are too old to learn the lesson of gratitude; yes, and learn how to recite the lesson. The first best benefit of a recitation is, it fixes the subject in the mind. The teacher can easily tell when the pupil has his mind and heart on

his work. Even so any of us can tell just how much our kindnesses are taken to heart by the manner in which they are reciprocated.

Now is the time to speak our praise. Think of the sweet now-and-now, instead of the sweet by-and-by, and say so. "Praise is comely." Thank your father for the new trousers, and your mother for the new hat; yes, thank them for everything they do for you. Give praise to your children for their little attentions. Commend your pupils for their every good deed. Do not overlook being kind and thankful toward your servants.

Do not wait until there is a funeral in the family to speak tenderly and kindly. Anoint the heads of the living. Francis Murphy has often been heard to exclaim to people that they should bring flowers to their minister while he is living; not wait until he is dead and then bring a whole lot of flowers and pile them about his coffin, saying, "Smell that!"

Now is the time for us to be kind to one another. Never get too big, nor too old to kiss your father and to hug your mother, and speak—yes, speak your love and gratitude.

I heard of a certain young man declaring his love to a certain young woman. Many times he told her how he loved her, and it was, no doubt, all true. And yet that happy girl had the audacity to ask her lover if he loved her. He replied: "I told you that I loved you. Can't you believe it?" "Yes," she said, "I believe it, but I like to hear you say it."

When any of you have done a kindness to another, who of you do not like to hear that person say, "Thank you"? The heart hungers for praise. Indeed there seems to be a kind of perpetual famine going along with us, all because we fail to express our gratitude.

"The love of praise, howe'er concealed by art,
Reigns more or less, and glows in ev'ry heart."

The scholar is praised and he studies the harder. The laborer is praised and he works the better. The child is praised and he is more obedient. The mother is praised and she toils on the happier. The father is praised and his heart is made strong. Shakespeare said it truly, "Our praises are our wages." It will pay more bills than silver and gold, and, indeed, it will pay bills that silver and gold cannot satisfy. It is heaven-minted coin, and will pass current in any land. Do you know of anything more self-satisfying? Xenophon once said, "The sweetest of all sounds is praise." "Let us offer the sacrifice of praise, . . . the fruit of our lips, giving thanks." For "praise is comely."

THINK AND DO

In the foregoing there has been no attempt to present a discussion comprehending the entire compass of Christian morality. It may be indicated, but it is not discussed. It has been, however, the purpose to awaken thought upon vital subjects touching the every-day life of Christians, especially young Christians.

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain."

In relation to Christian morality the purpose of diligent thinking is to determine what action shall obtain. Thought that does not bear fruit in service can have no definite value placed upon it. Service that is not the result of previous thinking may, by chance, be valuable, or be the unfortunate product of thoughtless energy. When the mind dictates service and directs in methods, harmonious results will be achieved. Back of all great events there were great thinkers. Behind all noble service there were noble minds. If you would act well, first

think well. First, "think on these things"; second, "these things do."

Paul suggests himself as an example to follow. Said he to the Philippians, "The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do." His suggestion to them is to think upon the things learned, received, heard, and seen in him, that they may be able to do them. And now we should regard ourselves as being exceedingly fortunate in having a type like Paul to follow.

What had the brethren of Philippi learned from Paul?

Paul came among them a stranger, but he came with a message. He found some devout persons "by a river side," and to them was told the story of the Cross. It moved upon some and they believed the message. Evil spirits were cast out and others believed. Delivered from prison at the hands of the Almighty God, Paul and Silas "spake unto them the word of the Lord." They learned how to suffer, how to comfort, how to instruct, how to do charity, how to pray for the children of faith, how to die for the Lord Jesus.

But another question: What had they received from Paul?

The three visits made among them gave opportunity to present the gospel in manifold forms, and to know the certainty of it. They received by faith Jesus Christ and with confidence entered into the fellowship of his disciples. Moreover, they obeyed the injunctions

of the gospel, not only in the presence of Paul and Silas, "but now much more in my absence." Because of this, Paul gives this admonition, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." They received Paul, the messenger of Jesus Christ, and listened to his word; they received Christ, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"; they received God, who "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Coming from Paul's lips and pen, what had they heard?

Down by the river side certain ones heard the gospel, and the Lord opened their hearts to receive it. They were taught in the ordinance of baptism; the necessity of daily prayer; how to sing and pray in prison; and many times they heard the same words that were offered to the jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." They heard as Paul and Silas "spake . . . the word of the Lord." The letter written from Rome indicates the breadth of their instruction and that unto them had been preached the whole gospel.

What had they seen in Paul?

Our words fall short, be they spoken or written, unless they are reinforced with a life which incarnates the teaching attempted. They saw in Paul that he believed every word he uttered.

His faith was aflame, his hope rose buoyant, his love was transcendent. They never saw anything like it. They were acquainted with brave men, but here were men, Paul and Silas, with their feet in stocks, who were secured in the "inner prison," who, "at midnight . . . prayed, and sang praises unto God." They observed the spirit of these men as they moved among them in peace, and they saw the same confiding spirit, the same trustful nature, the same loving heart, the same faithful endeavor, the same manly, self-sacrificing teachers of the crucified One.

Paul had moved among them in all good conscience. He was able to give an account of himself, whether in their presence or away from them. This being true, he could write them, saying, "The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do."

Most of us know better how to live than we do live. Yet there is no excuse for that. Certainly not to us living in the light and wisdom of the ages made wise in the gospel of the Son of God. If we know how to live we shall be made happy in living as well as we know how. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." Where had James learned that gospel? He had been taught of the Nazarene, who said, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." In the doing we manifest the truth, we reveal the gospel.

There is hypocrisy in thinking upon things seriously that we ought to do, and then leaving the same things untouched. Consider yourselves rebuked by our Lord saying, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" George Macdonald says, "Obedience is the key to every door." "If ye love me, keep my commandments." "To him who wears the cross, the first great law is—to obey." "Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified."

How can two walk together except they be agreed? Hand in hand "think and do." Often the question is being asked, "What can I do?" Think and see; try and do. In the morning-time project your thought and plan for the day. In the evening-time recall the works of your hands and be thankful. It caused lamentation to Apelles, the painter, to have a day pass without drawing some picture or line. Dr. Guthrie tells of one Thomas Wright, who, at the close of his day's work, took his Bible in hand and went to the prison that he might instruct the ignorant, reclaim the criminal, raise the fallen; and it is certain that, alone and single-handed, he rescued as many as four hundred criminals, restoring them, honest and well-doing men, to the bosom of society. Why should not every

one raise the question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

There is no necessity of being idle. There is something every one can do. There is something every one knows he can do. Some people ask for work and find it. Others affect to be hunting work, but never find any to do. There are others who always have work and plenty of it to do, and no one ever heard of their being out of employment. Willing hands are magnets attracting to them something else to do. No sooner are they finishing one piece of work than another piece appears needing to be done.

Think and do! There is a deal of latent energy in our churches, and it is all going to waste for the want of direction. What power! what moral energy! what force lies silent and as if dead among us as Christians because we are not thinking what to do, and we are not doing what we think!

Until we have reached the conclusion that we are willing to make sacrifices for Christ and the kingdom of heaven, we have made little progress in the Christ-life. If in this life we hope to "taste of the heavenly gift," we must do more than leave everything for some one else to do. There are burdens to be borne; there is service to be rendered; there is work to be done; there are sacrifices to be made; there are responsibilities to be assumed; there are obligations to be met; there is comfort to be bestowed; there are souls to be enlightened; there are per-

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ishing ones to be rescued, and we are to help lift the burden of this old world, bringing "life and immortality to light."

Do you hesitate to receive this counsel for its face value? Then I bring to you the advice of one whose words you would be very slow to refuse. I am sure you are willing to listen to "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God," as he brings to you a plea out of the experiences of his heart, saying, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

I would have you note the difference between its hurting you to serve the Lord and serving the Lord till it hurts you.

If it hurts you to serve the Lord, it means that you are lacking in consecration. "The minding of the flesh is enmity against God."

Serving the Lord till it hurts "is your reasonable service." "If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him."

In order that one may make a good record in his Christian life, Henry Van Dyke tells us there are four things to learn:

"To think without confusion clearly;
To love his fellow-men sincerely;
To act from honest motives purely;
To trust in God and heaven securely."

Think and do! Let thought and service wed. Consecration is man's act. God can sanctify,

but it is the will of man that consecrates. "Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?"

You are anxious to lead a worthy life. You recall the words of our Lord saying, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." And you say, "Is it possible?" Would our Lord have enjoined it, were it impossible?

The perfect life! without spot! faultless! holy and unblamable and unreprovable! It seems too good to be true! And yet if it is not true, the whole system of our religion is false.

Think and do! The chief end of man is to inquire into the will of God and do it. This is the life principle upon which you are to build.

According to the program of Professor Henry Drummond, we have the following:

The definition of an ideal life: "A man after my own heart, who will fulfill all my law."

The object of life: "I come to do thy will, O God."

The food of life: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me."

The society of life: "He that doeth the will of my Father in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother."

The education of life: "Teach me to do thy will, O God."

The pleasures of life: "I delight to do thy will, O God."

The eternity of life: "He that doeth the will of God, abideth forever."

AND THE GOD OF PEACE SHALL BE WITH YOU

To THIS present moment you have accorded a thoughtful hearing to phases of Christian morality, which, when observed, will meet most conditions of divine fellowship. My heart's experience tells me, "If you do these things, the God of peace shall be with you."

I cannot conclude these thoughts, however, without a word with you concerning the inestimable privilege of holding communion with God, as well as the diligent cultivation of practical holiness.

The path in which we have been traveling is well worn. Many have gone this way before us. They have believed in the Christ of God and embraced the principles of his instruction, in which they have been both comforted and strengthened. The evidences are manifold in which Christianity demonstrates that it is the friend of mankind. These evidences cover a period of almost two thousand years.

The Father came very near to humanity when he consented to have his Son represent him in the parliament of man. So near did he come that he fashioned his Son like ordinary human beings, for he sent "his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh."

I think it was great condescension for God to come so near to "sinful flesh" and associate with mankind. Certainly it gave to mankind a great privilege, and one man who highly appreciated it bears the following testimony, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

Among the ancients it was believed that only a very select few had access to the gods.

In the early history of the Hebrews it was the privilege of a few to walk and talk with God, yet the belief was that God was far away, and, being far away, the common people must have God interpreted to them.

By and by the cry became importunate for God to draw nearer to humanity. That was a universal prayer. The prophet assured the people that God would respect their request. The people believed the prophets and increased their cry with the hope that God might haste and come among them.

"In the fullness of time" he heard their importunity and clothed his Son in mortal flesh. In doing this the Father made it possible for him to come to the side of every toiler, and burden-bearer, and careworn mortal and slave of sin, that they might know that they were loved and somebody cared for them.

Christ so completely fulfilled the expectations of the people that the people themselves doubted him.

And yet some believed and followed him, being taught. Those were days when God was

close to his people. He met the servant in the garden and instructed him; he came to the toiling mother and she was comforted; in the bazaars he mingled with the busy multitudes, giving lessons of honesty; in the sick chamber he came with curing grace; to the man who had met with serious accident he gave healing power; all others forsook the leper and cast him out of the city, but the Son of God came to him and healed him, even touching him; where virtue was lacking he came with forgiving grace; where burdens were heavy he bore them instead; where hearts were breaking he poured in the oil of joy; he touched humanity at every possible point, bringing a blessing. The world had never seen life-devotions upon this fashion. This was service! It was God-service! It was God!

The far-away God was made nigh by Jesus Christ. A few learned the supreme lesson of fellowship with the Father through this man of Nazareth. Only a few realized how near God had come. The revelation grew upon them; more and more it came to the multitude that this was God mingling among his people.

Formerly they had inquired of God through the priest and the prophet, and their place of worship was in Jerusalem. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

No longer is the Father in some far-off distance; no longer is it necessary to come to the sacred mountain in Samaria or to Jerusalem

in order that sacrifices may be made, sins forgiven, and the Father worshiped. "God is a spirit," and he touches soul-life anywhere.

Still it remains a mystery to most young people, and they cannot tell how we are to fellowship God and hold communion with him.

To a father is born a son, and he is blind. The child grows to manhood never looking upon the countenance of his father. Many times the father has pitied the child groping about. Many times the child has wished in vain that he might look into the face of his father. But the child learns to know the voice of the father and is able to distinguish it from the most perfect imitation. He learns to know his father by touch; every footstep speaks. They love each other; they talk together; they fellowship; they joy and sorrow together; they commune. This communion may have a physical basis, but it does not depend upon that physical basis. The blind child grows to manhood knowing and loving his father "in spirit and in truth."

Fellowship and communion are not dependent upon eyes. Indeed they are not dependent upon any of the five senses. The blending of spirit with spirit cannot be expressed by the senses. True fellowship and communion are of the heart. It is soul speaking to soul. This is what Jesus made emphatic to the woman of Samaria when he said to her, "God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." That is communion

and fellowship. It is the scientific basis of all communion and fellowship.

You are a soul and I am a soul. Your soul is rooted in psychic life. My soul is rooted in psychic life. The terms of communion must, therefore, be spiritual.

The soul may call the senses into action. It may dictate the conduct of the physical. You are not, however, to regard this physical expression as the source of fellowship. The physical may be all aglow with interest and regard, but such could not be unless the one had communicated with the other in the language of the soul.

It is held as a high privilege to have heart talks with another. How much greater the privilege to talk right into the heart of the Infinite and have God talk right into the heart of the finite? You talk into the bosom of the Father, and the Father talks right back into your heart. And it is done after the very same manner in which you have heart talks with any dear friend.

Turning to the Holy Book you are furnished with examples of men whose fellowship with the Father was close. "Enoch walked with God." "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. . . . Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." Of David the Lord said, "A man after my own heart." Abel "obtained witness that he was righteous." Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is

God." "Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." Of Levi we are taught by Malachi one of the "thus saith the Lord," that "the law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity." David says, "Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways."

"What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

The natural sequence to this fellowship and communion with God is practical holiness. The life itself is clean. The motives are clear. The purposes are direct and not misleading. The spirit is sweet. Nothing is too hard to do for your God-friend. You are not a drudge, even though you work ever so hard. You are not a servant, even though your labor seems ever so menial. You are more than an artist, for you put more than taste into your work; you do more than adorn. You are a lover, for you put conscience into your work. Every task is accepted as a sacred trust. All service is performed with a view to pleasing God. Selfish-

ness is relegated to the lower regions, and there is no attempt to glorify anybody but God only. Labor becomes a divine sacrament in which the worker meets his Lord. You admit God to partnership, and service is transfigured. Become a coworker with the Eternal, and you always have the Mount of Blessing for your workshop. By it life is both simplified and glorified. Wherever you go, and whatever the reasons are bringing you there, your motto is, "Holiness unto the Lord." You take your religion into your business, you decorate, consecrate, adorn, and sanctify your business with your religion. You go nowhere but that God is asked to go along, and if you think God will not go, you refrain from going. Indeed and in truth you are a laborer together with God. This is practical holiness.

My dear young Christian, a clean heart will not last long unless it is seen at the fingers' end. Intimate friendship with the Eternal means a "clean heart" plus "clean hands." Or, as Paul says, "In all things willing to live honestly." Or, as Micah says, "To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Thereby, "Grow into a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Never climb a ladder unless "underneath are the everlasting arms." Never go to war except "the eternal God is thy refuge." Never make a journey without impersonating the psalmist, saying, "I will lift up mine eyes unto

the hills, from whence cometh my help." Never meet any one in conversation without introducing Christ, saying, "This is my beloved, and this is my friend." Never allow yourself to become lost, or befogged, or in doubt, without crying, "Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?" Never load yourself up with a multitude of burdens, but "humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." "Keep step with the Master." "And the God of peace shall be with you."

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen."

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